

mythologos newsletter
VOLUME ONE
ISSUE 05
JULY 2021



ONCE UPON A TIME:
THE
FAIRY TALE
LIFE OF
ANDREW LANG



EDITORIAL

Welcome to the fifth issue of the Mythologos Newsletter! This is a special issue for me. I had originally imagined the Newsletter to be in landscape format, like a coffee-table book, but it took a while to find the right tools to do that. I'm using Scribus now, instead of LibreOffice, and I think it's a big change for the better. As always, I'm excited to share with you the lives and accomplishments of fascinating people you might not have heard of before:

The Fairy Tale Life of Andrew Lang: One of the first Folklorists and a legendary collector of fairy tales. A happy life story for a change!

H.J. Ford - A Forgotten Master: A brief profile and gallery highlighting one of the greatest illustrators you've never heard of!

Unix Profiles 0004: Meet Doug McIlroy, one of the most important contributors to Unix!

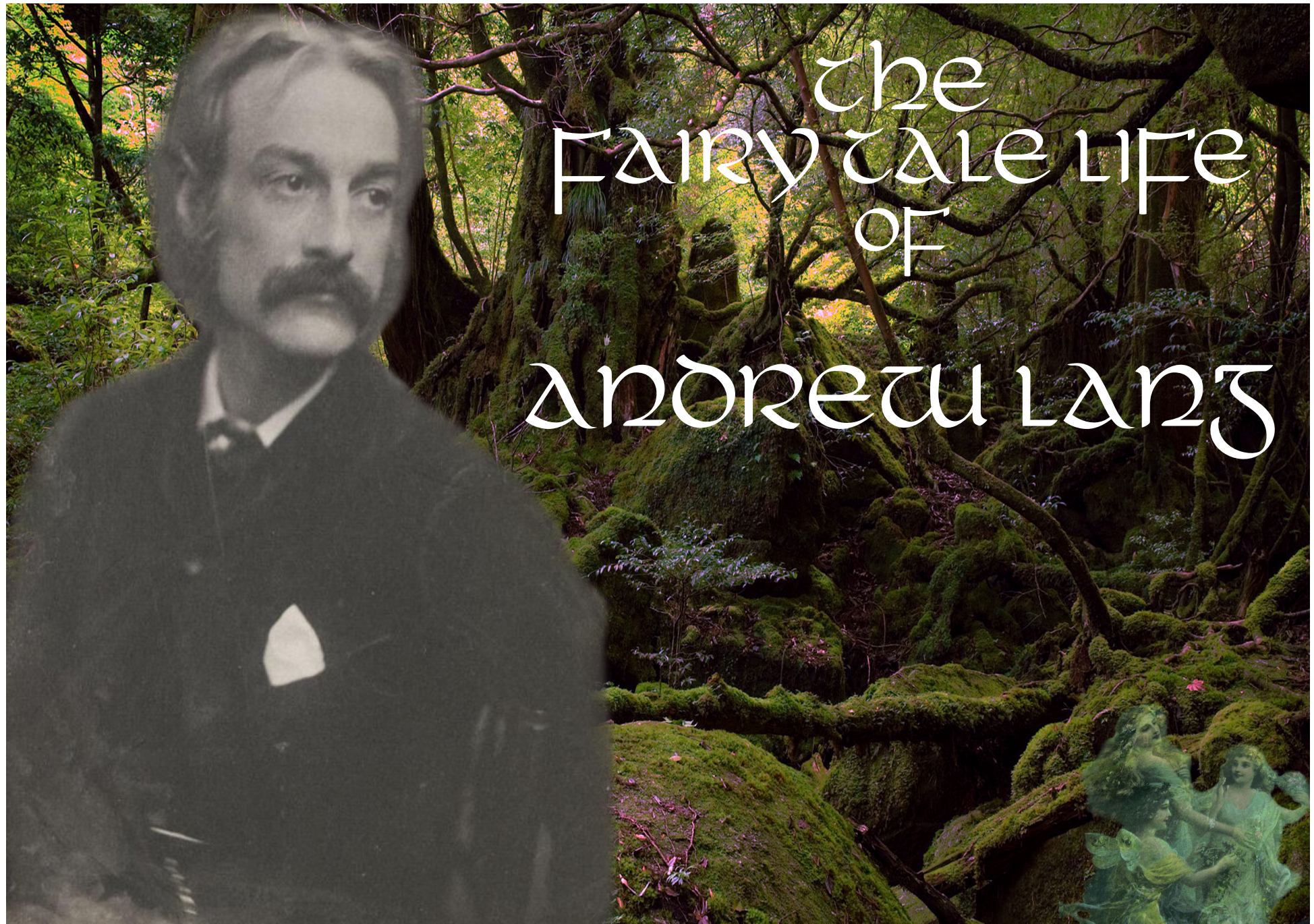
Communique: Letters from listeners & readers!

Errata: The latest writing updates.

I love hearing from you, don't hesitate to write!

As always: *Good luck to you!*

- Ed.



once upon a time . . .

Andrew Lang (31 March 1844 – 20 July 1912) can truly be said to have lived a "charmed" life. But like his most frequent illustrator, H.J. Ford, Lang has been forgotten over time, the only trace of his long and productive career being the twelve Rainbow Fairy Books that carry his name, although they, alone among his vast output, were not written by him!

Lang came before the advent of Field Anthropology, he didn't travel to far flung places to gather data, he was an "armchair scholar", the epithet now thrown at Lang's generation of folklorists; but the breadth and depth of his work speaks for itself. Above all else, Lang possessed an insatiable curiosity, resulting in an impressively large and varied bibliography.

Lang was born the eldest of eight children, in Selkirk, Scotland, his father John was Town Clerk. Lang was educated at the local Grammar School, and would eventually reach Balliol College, Oxford. I have not been able to uncover much about Lang's formative years, but he did read John Ferguson McLennan, another Scot fascinated by folk culture and narrative; McLennan was a lawyer and journalist who pursued his anthropological interests on his own time and published *Primitive Marriage* in 1865, a George Frazier-like examination of bride-kidnapping and kinship, whose ideas, focused heavily on matriarchy, would influence twentieth century social anthropology, and certainly influenced Lang's future marital relationship. He also studied Sir Edward Burnett Tylor (2 October 1832 – 2 January 1917), a British anthropologist with less socialist and more Darwinian ideas than McLennan, and his influence can be felt in Lang's sensibilities as well.

Lang married Leonora Alleyne in 1865. Leonora would become the single most important contributor to the Rainbow Fairy Books, acting as a researcher, translator, transcriptionist, editor and designer along with Andrew Lang. It is fair to say that all the various tale-collections published under the Lang name would not have existed without her.

"I . . . superintend. I find out where the stories are, and advise, and, in short, superintend. I do not write the stories out of my own head." (Andrew Lang, *The Lilac Fairy Book*, 1910)

After completing his education, primarily in classical languages and literature, Lang became a Fellow at Merton College in 1875, where J.R.R. Tolkien would later teach. Lang's literary pursuits were far ranging, encompassing everything from poetry and journalism, to history, biography, translation and fiction. He would continue to pursue and discover new literary forms until the end of his life, but it was as a compiler of story collections that he would become most famous.

A few of his more interesting projects include an early foray into "fan fiction", *Old Friends: Essays in Epistolary Parody* (1890), a collection of fictional letters written between characters from different authors; and *Shakespeare, Bacon and the Great Unknown* (1912), an early response to the theory that William Shakespeare was not the author of the plays and poems attributed to him.

Lang's early works also included anthropological and folkloric subjects, notably *Custom and Myth* (1884). In *Myth, Ritual and Religion* (1887), Lang argued that belief in the supernatural was neither irrational nor superstitious.

Indeed, around this same time, he joined the Psychical Society, a sort of Victorian *X-Files*, whose members investigated various super-natural claims. A popular topic at the time was the possible reality of fairies, as paranormal

beings, and it is entirely possible that Andrew Lang believed in fairies, as did Arthur Conan Doyle and many other writers!

"As to whether there are really any fairies or not . . . Professor Huxley thinks there are none. [I] never saw any . . . but [know] several who have seen them, in the Highlands, and heard their music. If ever you are in Nether Lochaber, go to the Hill and you may hear the music yourself . . . if there are really no fairies, why do people believe in them?" (Andrew Lang, Preface to the *Yellow Fairy Book*, 1894).

under an enchantment

The first in the Rainbow Fairy Book series, the *Blue Fairy Book*, arrived in 1889. Andrew and Leonora planned an elaborate first edition, and oversaw every aspect of production, resulting in a book that is still strikingly beautiful today. The *Blue Fairy Book* was "written for children" (according to the Preface), and featured an ambitious collection of tales culled from popular sources, such as Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm, from new translations, made by the Lang's ever-growing army of "secretaries". It would later be claimed that Lang did not credit the work of these women or of Leonora, but that is demonstrably false. Indeed, Lang would go to great pains in his Prefaces to inform the reader that he was only the editor:

"The Editor takes this opportunity to repeat what he has often said before: that he is not the author of the stories in the Fairy Books, that he did not invent them out of his own head. He is accustomed to being asked by ladies, 'Have you written anything else except the Fairy Books?' He is then obliged to explain that he has not written the Fairy Books, but save these, has written almost everything else except hymns, sermons and dramatic works." (Andrew Lang, *The Violet Fairy Book*, 1901).

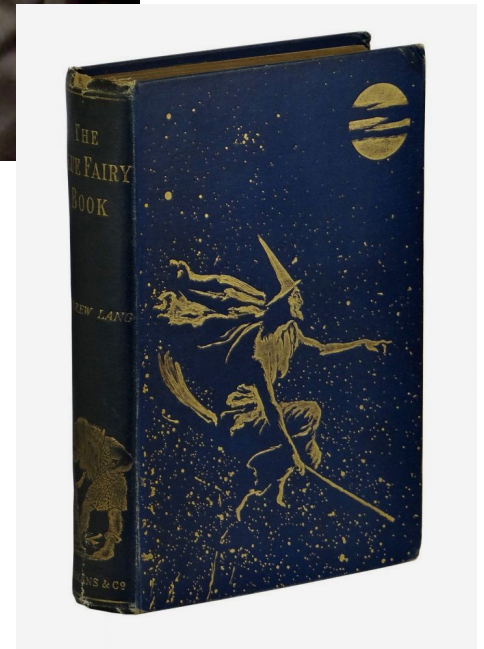


Left:

Leonora Lang.
Andrew Lang
depended on her
as editor,
translator,
transcriptionist
and art director.

Right:

First Edition, First
Printing of the *Blue
Fairy Book*, 1889.



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"A sense of literary honesty compels the Editor to keep repeating that he is the Editor and not the author of the Fairy Tales, just as a distinguished man of science is only the Editor not the Author of Nature. Like nature, popular tales are too vast to be the creation of a single modern mind. The Editor's business is to hunt for collections of these stories . . . from New Caledonia to Zululand, from the frozen snows of the Polar regions to Greece or Spain or Italy or far Lochaber. When the tales are found, they are adapted to the needs of British children by various hands, the Editor doing little beyond guarding the interests of propriety and toning down to mild reproofs the tortures inflicted on wicked stepmothers and other naughty characters. These explanations have frequently been offered already, but as far as ladies and children are concerned, to no purpose. They still ask the Editor how he can invent many stories more than Shakespeare, Dumas and Charles Dickens could have invented in a century! And the Editor still avers in Prefaces that he did not invent *one* of the stories; that nobody knows, as a rule, who invented them or where or when." (Andrew Lang, *The Crimson Fairy Book*, 1903).

All of the women who contributed to the Rainbow series would remember their work under the Langs fondly. The *Blue Fairy Book* was lavishly illustrated by Henry Justice Ford (featured in the next article) and George Percy Jacomb-Hood. Ford would go on to illustrate the rest of the series alone, an extraordinary accomplishment, there is an illustration on almost every page! The *Blue Fairy Book* was an instant success. Eleven more volumes were to follow:

Right Top: Rainbow Fairy Books, First Editions

Right Bottom: Rainbow Fairy Books, Dover Editions



*Red Fairy Book (1890) Green Fairy Book (1892)
(Introduced as "the third and probably the last" in the
Preface) Yellow Fairy Book (1894) Pink Fairy Book (1897)
Grey Fairy Book (1900) Violet Fairy Book (1901) Crimson
Fairy Book (1903) Brown Fairy Book (1904) Orange Fairy
Book (1906) Olive Fairy Book (1907) Lilac Fairy Book
(1910)*



happily ever after

As the series continued, the Langs narrowed their definition of fairy tale, for the most part excluding excerpts from novels, such as *Gulliver's Travels* (*Blue Fairy Book*), and focusing increasingly on oral traditions, medieval and ancient epics and sagas. The Prefaces are as entertaining as the collected stories, containing Lang's musings on folklore, defenses of the Rainbow series (dismissed as frivolous by serious Folklorists), and jocular barbs directed at the theories of his academic colleagues.

The Langs produced other anthologies: *My Own Fairy Book* (1895), *The Animal Story Book* (1896), *The Nursery Rhyme Book* (1897), *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* (1898); and Lang completed additional scholarly works: *Making of Religion* (1898), *The Homeric Hymns* (1899, as translator) among others.

The original Rainbow series would inspire two generations of fantasists, including L. Frank Baum, J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis. Lang's influence over Tolkien can plainly be seen in the introductory verse to the *Yellow Fairy Book*:

"And going where this pathway goes
You too at last may find (who knows?)
The Garden of the Singing Rose."

"Still round the corner there may wait
A new road or a secret gate
And though I oft have passed them by
A day will come at last when I
Shall take the hidden paths that run
West of the Moon, East of the Sun."
- J.R.R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* (1954)

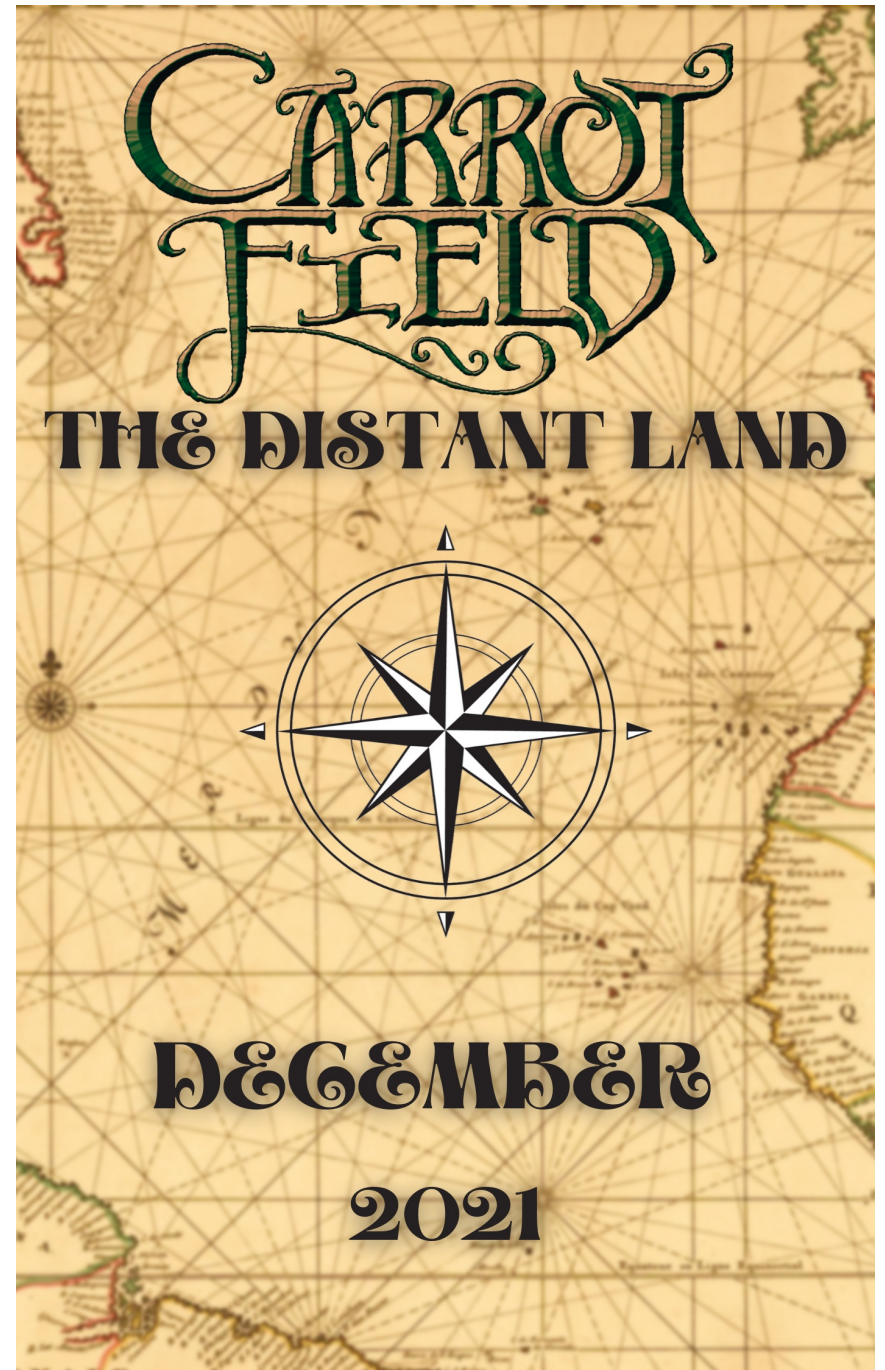
Andrew Lang is a rare example of a genuine "fairy tale" life: he excelled at everything he pursued, attained mainstream success, and was highly regarded as a professor of classical literature and as an amateur folklorist. He shared his success freely as a collaborator and was remembered warmly by all who knew him. Andrew Lang passed away in 1906. The Rainbow Fairy Books remain the gold standard for fairy-tale collections and are still in print with all of their original illustrations.

- Ed.



TRADE PAPERBACK
AUDIOBOOK
EBOOK

AMAZON.COM
AUDIBLE.COM





H.J. FORD A FORGOTTEN MASTER

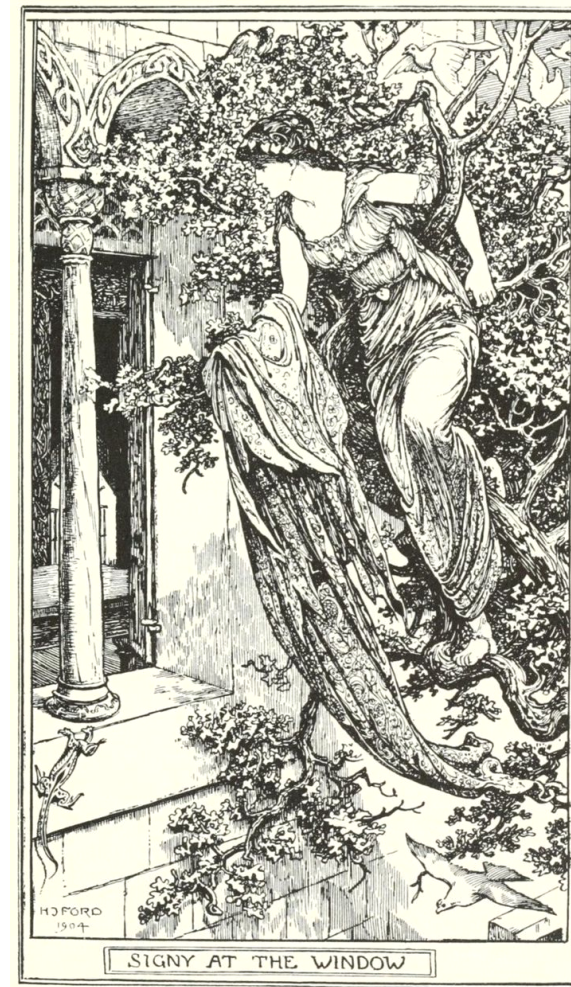
Andrew Lang employed many excellent illustrators, including Arthur Hughes, one of the most prolific and popular illustrators of the Victorian Era, but my personal favorite is Henry Justice Ford (1860-1941), who has faded into obscurity despite an Herculean output and a unique, eye-catching style.

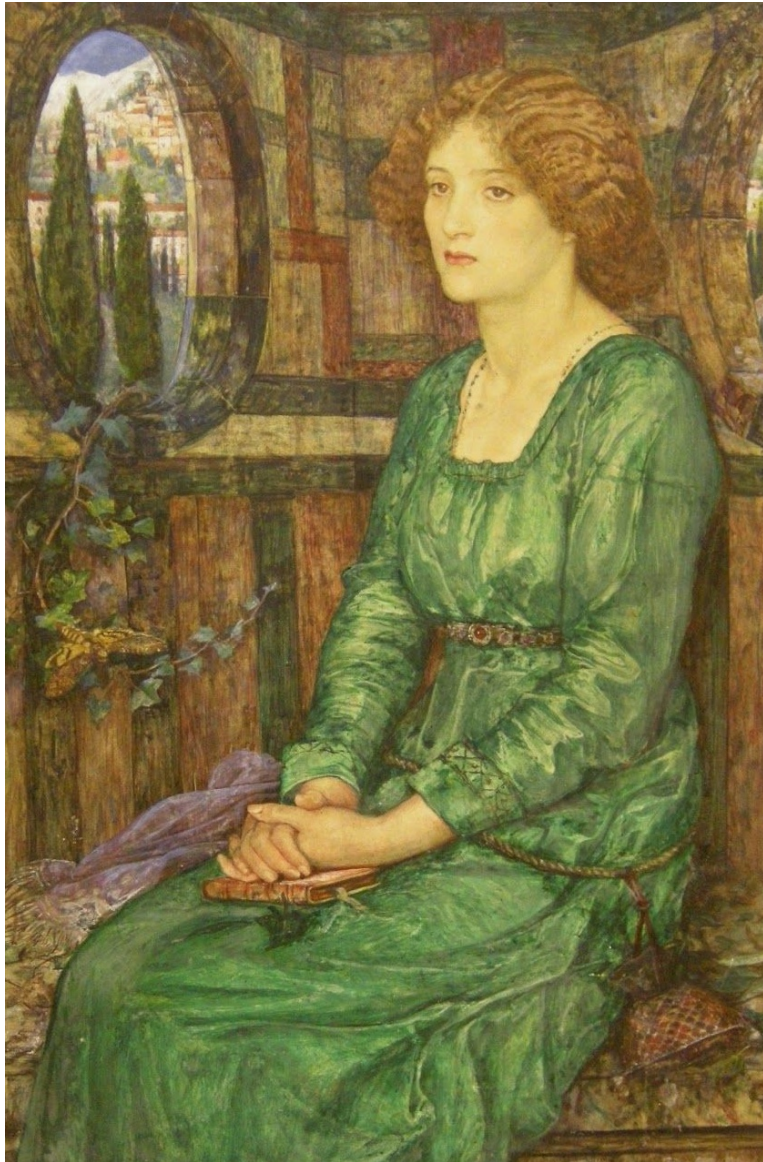
Born in London to a colorful family of financiers and professional cricketers, Ford was born to live the life of a nonconformist, coming into contact with many of the eminent literary men of his time. He received his primary education at the Repton School, an independent Christian day-school established in 1557. Ford then attended Clare College, Cambridge, on a scholarship, graduating with a degree in the Classics in 1882. Ford returned to London and attended the Slade School of Fine Art, then the Bushey School of Art. Ten years later, Ford was exhibiting historical paintings and landscapes at the Royal Academy of Art. But his destiny was elsewhere, and he quickly gained a reputation as a gifted book illustrator.

In the family tradition, Ford was an enthusiastic cricketer and he played regularly with J.M. Barrie, the creator of Peter Pan. Ford would go on to provide the famous map of Kensington Gardens for Barrie, and design the Peter Pan costume for the original production of the play, which would later be adapted into a book by Barrie and the famous Walt Disney animated film (1953). Through his friendship with J.M. Barrie, Ford associated with other famous writers of the time, such as Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, PG Wodehouse and Alfred Edward Woodley Mason, author of *The Four Feathers*. At the age of 61, Ford married Emily Amelia Hoff, a widow thirty-five years his junior. Their marriage was a success, and in 1927 the couple adopted a daughter, whom they named June Mary Magdelene Ford. June can be seen pictured in Ford's painting "Remembering Happier Things".

Ford freely mixed historical and realistic detail with imagination. His illustrations were always monochromatic ink-line, but the introduction of colored lithographic printing in the late nineteenth century opened up new approaches; after some experimentation, Ford settled on watercolor as the best medium to color his ink illustrations. Ford continued to work until his death in 1941. The advent of modernism and its eventual influence over illustration would gradually erase Ford from the history of illustration art, but fans of Victoriana and fairy tales have kept his massive body of work from disappearing completely.

H.J. FORD GALLERY





*"Remembering Happier Things"
Portrait of June Ford*



Right:

*"Grendel's
Mother"*

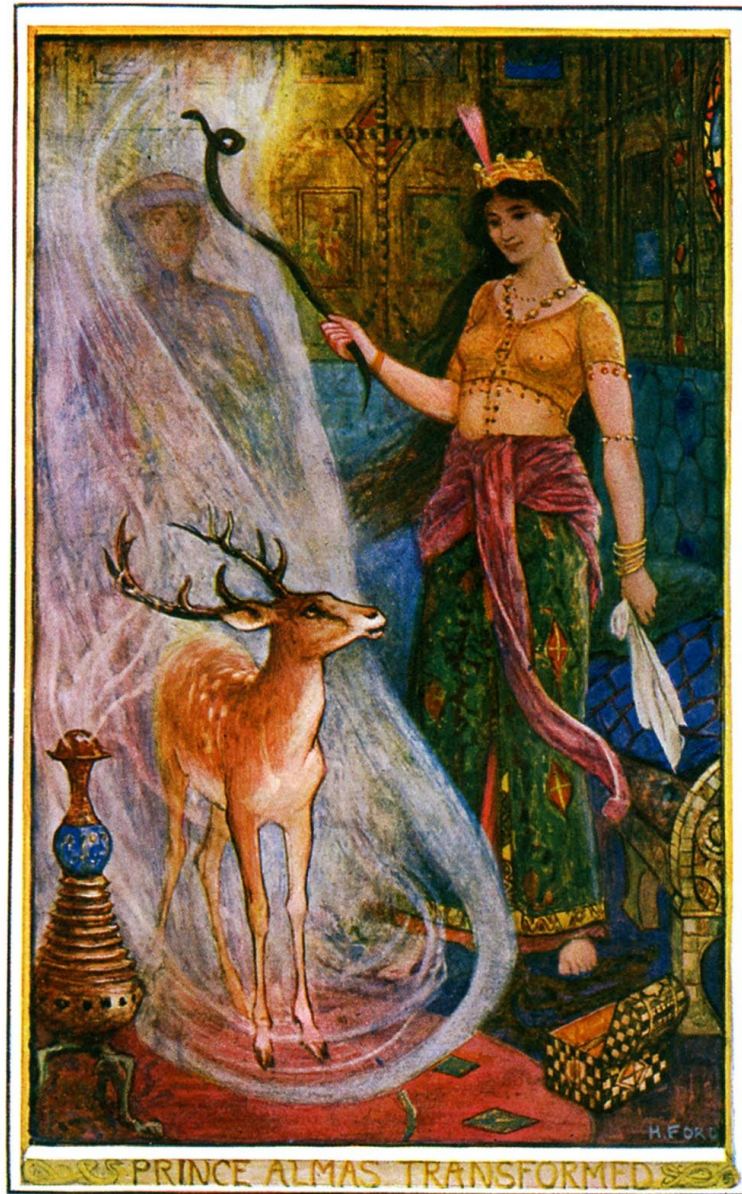


Left:

*"The Death
Of
Beowulf"*









"McIlroy ... is the smartest of all of us and the least remembered or written down of all of us [programmers at Bell Labs' Computing Techniques Research Department]."

Ken Thompson (2019)

LIFE & CAREER

- + Born 1932
- + Graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor's degree in engineering physics
- + Graduated with a PHD in applied mathematics from MIT in 1959
- + Taught at MIT from 1954-1958
- + Joined Bell Laboratories in 1958
- + Was head of the Computing Techniques Research Department (where Unix was born) from 1965 to 1986 and then was Distinguished Member of Technical Staff
- + From 1967 to 1968 served as a visiting lecturer at Oxford University
- + Retired from Bell Labs in 1997, and became an Adjunct Professor in the Dartmouth College Computer Science Department

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- + Made significant contributions to Macro Processing
- + Contributed to several programming languages, including: SNOBOL, ALTRAN, C++
- + Pioneered software componentization and component-based software, making a significant impact on how electronic devices are designed
- + Coauthored M6 macro processor in FORTRAN IV, which was used in ALTRAN and later was ported to and included in early versions of Unix
- + Served the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) as national lecturer
- + Turing Award chairman
- + Associate editor for the Communications of the ACM, the Journal of the ACM, and ACM Transactions on Programming Languages and Systems
- + Served on the executive committee of CSNET
- + (1990s) Worked on improving sorting techniques
- + Member of the National Academy of Engineering
- + Won both the USENIX Lifetime Achievement Award ("The Flame") and its Software Tools award

UNIX CONTRIBUTIONS

- + (1960s and 1970s) Contributed programs for Multics (such as RUNOFF) and Unix operating systems, including diff, echo, join, tsort, calendar and look, all of which are still in use via the POSIX Standard, the GNU Project and Unix-distributions such as BSD and Linux
- + Introduced the idea of pipelines i.e. the practice of connecting or "piping" programs together
- + Implemented TMG compiler-compiler in PDP-7 and PDP-11 assembly language (the first real Unix computer), influencing Ken Thompson's B programming language and Stephen Johnson's Yacc (yet another compiler-compiler) parser-generator
- + Assumed maintenance of the Unix Manual (Unix 7), "as a labor of love". "The fact that there was a manual, that he [McIlroy] insisted on a high standard for the manual, meant that he insisted on a high standard for every one of the programs that was documented." (Sandy Fraser)

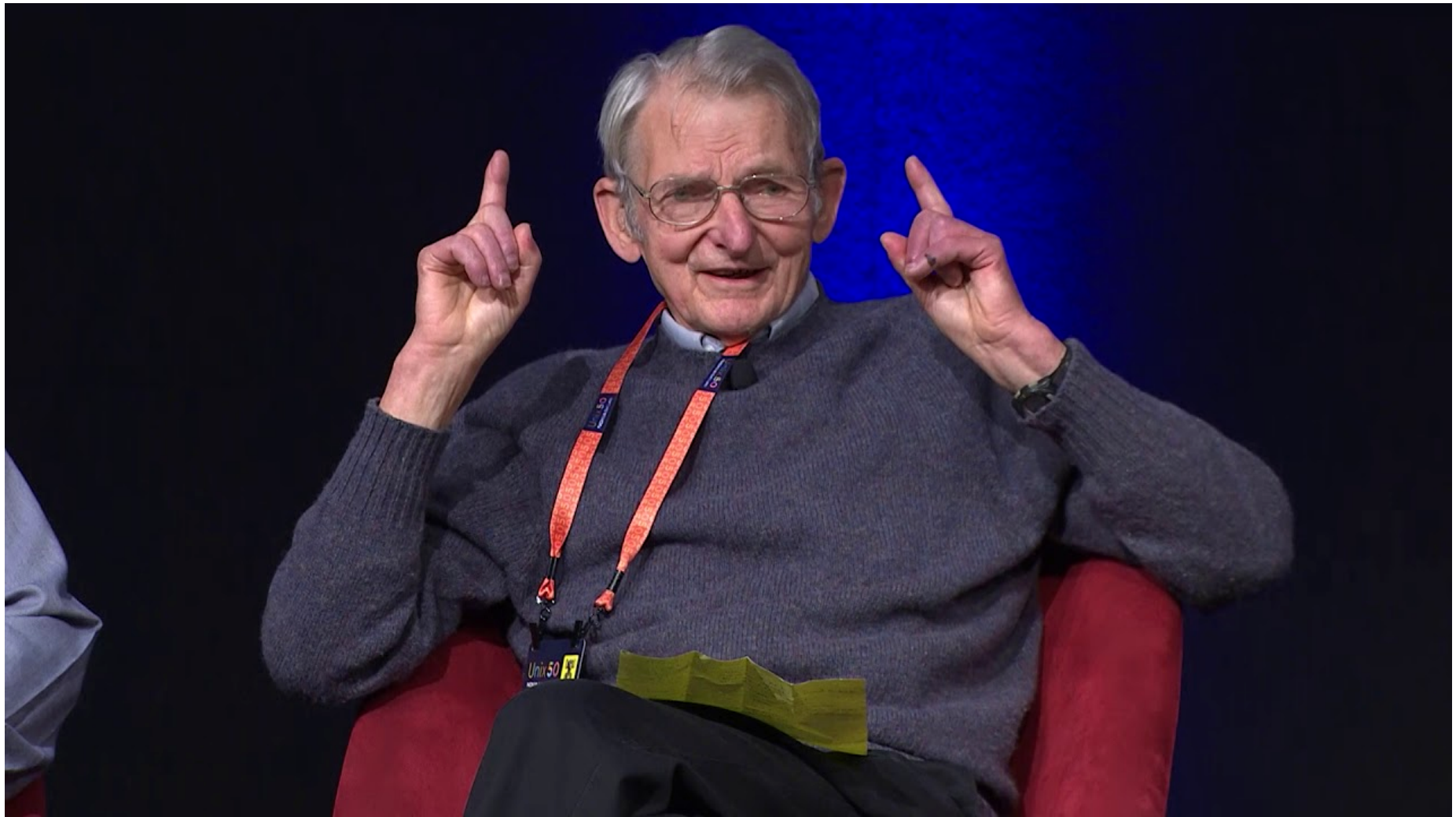
QUOTES

"This is the Unix philosophy: Write programs that do one thing and do it well. Write programs to work together. Write programs to handle text streams, because that is a universal interface."

"The notion of 'intricate and beautiful complexities' is almost an oxymoron. That Unix programmers vie with each other for 'simple and beautiful' honors a point that's implicit in these rules, but is well worth making overt."

"Word and Excel and PowerPoint and other Microsoft programs have intimate, one might say promiscuous, knowledge of each others' internals. In Unix, one tries to design programs to operate not specifically with each other, but with programs as yet unthought of."

"Everything was small... and my heart sinks for Linux when I see the size of it. The manual page, which really used to be a manual page, is now a small volume, with a thousand options. We used to sit around in the Unix Room saying, 'What can we throw out? Why is there this option?' It's often because there is some deficiency in the basic design you didn't really hit the right design point. Instead of adding an option, think about what was forcing you to add that option."



Doug McIlroy

COMMUNIQUE

Hello from France,

Thanks a lot for this issue. I wanted to ask you: is there a way to read the previous ones? This is the very first I've received, as I only recently subscribed and I would love to start with the previous issues if it is possible—if it is not, well, I should have subscribed sooner, I guess ;)

- Yaglb

Hey Vincent,

I really enjoyed the newsletter, I had no idea of the deep history behind The Epic of Gilgamesh. I always thought it just another famous ancient piece of literature that was heralded because of its age. The themes presented seem so very human and I have a better understanding of why it is praised as much as it is. I will have to read it for myself one of these days.

I also picked up an ebook copy of Carrot Field and am on chapter 5. It is lovely so far, I love the prose and the mirrors to Lord of the Rings with the familial history and chronicling aspect. I find myself lost in the fantastic world you have painted.

Anyways, the purpose of this email was to ask if you kept copies of the old versions of the newsletters, as I would love to read them. Would it be possible to send them to me?

Either way, thanks again for all the content and I hope to continue supporting you further, you have climbed the ranks of my favorite creators and share many of the passions I do in software philosophy and a love of creative endeavors.

Have a great day,

- John

Thank you for writing and for giving Carrot Field a try! Backissues are available for anyone who wants to read them, just email me at carrotfieldchronicles@gmail.com and put "Back Issues" in the subject line! When I have the time, I will set up a way for readers to download back issues. Any suggestions on the best way to do that?

- Ed.



Left:

This image was sent by faithful listener and reader Sean. Thanks, Sean!

Carrot Field isn't really a children's book, but it's suitable for kids 8 and up, if they've tackled things like J.R.R. Tolkien, Redwall or Watership Down.

ERRATA

Carrot Field: The Distant Land

I am about half finished book two of the Carrot Field Trilogy! But I still need your help to publish it this year: please think of making a donation to the project at [Liberapay.com/Mythologos](https://liberapay.com/Mythologos). The money will go toward overhead such as a professional cover illustration! The Distant Land is shaping up to be bigger, deeper and even crazier than the original!

Omniad: Volume One

Exhaustive preparation for this massive 15 volume novel continues! I have almost finished basic configuration for the Holistic Index, which will make accessing my gigantic 27 year old archive of related manuscripts possible, and I am half finished a detailed outline for volume one. I believe that Omniad will be one of the most important works of literature written in the 21st century!

Mythologos Publishing

In 2022 I will launch Mythologos Publishing. All future content will be published under this imprint. I'm extremely excited about the new slate of publications that will be coming, including a special one-off Carrot Field Companion that will tell the whole history of the project and the world of Carrot Field. I'll be announcing the full publishing program for 2022 after The Distant Land has been released. Stay tuned!

That's all for this issue, see you on LBRY & Odysee and the next issue!

- **Ed.**